



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2021

No. 184

Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, Jr., a Senator from the State of Maine.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

God of all nations, Lord of all people, thank You for this land that has received Your blessings.

Lord, throughout our Nation's history, You have saved us from calamities. You have blessed us, even when we have failed to live up to our great heritage of freedom.

Today, empower our Senators to protect and guard the foundations of our liberty. Remind them that eternal vigilance continues to be the price we must pay for freedom. When our lawmakers are weary, replenish them with the inspiration of Your presence, as they remember Your promise never to forsake them. Bellow the flickering embers of their hearts until their lives are aglow with the fires of patriotism, vision, and hope.

We pray in Your marvelous Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, October 20, 2021.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, Jr., a Senator from the State of Maine, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KING thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR EN BLOC

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I understand that there are six bills at the desk due for a second reading en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will read the bills by title for the second time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 3005) establishing appropriate thresholds for certain budget points of order in the Senate, and for other purposes.

A bill (S. 3006) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to extend the discretionary spending limits for fiscal years 2022 through 2031.

A bill (S. 3007) to amend the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to extend the discretionary spending limits.

A bill (S. 3008) to establish the Federal Rainy Day Fund to control emergency spending.

A bill (S. 3009) to amend title VI of the Social Security Act to remove the prohibition

on States and territories against lowering their taxes.

A bill (S. 3010) to cap noninterest Federal spending as a percentage of potential GDP to right-size the Government, grow the economy, and balance the budget.

Mr. SCHUMER. In order to place the bills on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I would object to further proceeding en bloc.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Objection having been heard, the bills will be placed on the calendar.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you.

FREEDOM TO VOTE ACT

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, for over 240 years, the story of American democracy has been an inexorable march toward universal suffrage—toward the realization of that sacred principle that all citizens should have a voice in selecting their leaders.

The grand ideal had humble beginnings. At the time of the Constitution's ratification, hardly 1 in 10 Americans would have been even eligible to vote.

If you were not White, not a landowner, not a male, and not a Protestant, chances were that the democracy did not apply to you; chances were that you were cut out of the political process.

It took over two centuries of Americans marching, fighting, and dying for the promise of freedom to expand to our citizens, regardless of race or gender or creed, the right to vote.

But for every two steps forward, sometimes there are those who try to pull us one step back. Unfortunately, we find ourselves today in the midst of such a struggle.

Across the country, the Big Lie—the Big Lie—has spread like a cancer, as many States across the Nation have passed the most draconian restrictions against voting that we have seen in decades. If nothing is done, these laws will make it harder for millions of Americans to participate in their government.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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